

634 Each county can also be divided into districts to which agents are sent with the approval of the provincial People's council. The same procedure can be applied to a municipality, which has need of agents to look after the administration of each street.

The nature and function of local government from the municipality down to the county and hsiang level, has changed radically since the beginning of the Communist regime. Popular organizations make it possible to keep the individual under closer surveillance than was possible in the past.

Under the early Republic and Kuomintang, a county was run by a single person called the magistrate, at times assisted by a few department heads of his own choosing. Now, the county People's council, according to the Communist Constitution, consists of a head, a deputy-head, and from twenty one to thirty-one members and ten heads of administrative departments, namely, (1) civil affairs, (2) public security, (3) finance (4) grain, (5) taxes, (6) industry and commerce, (7) agriculture and forestry, (8) transportation, (9) culture and education, and (10) health; with others to be added when necessary.

632 A hsiang council can have a head, a deputy
634 head, three to thirteen members and also four to five department heads.

The People's congress on a county or a hsian level exercises the same functions as the provincial congress, which is covered by Article 58 of the Constitution: (1) to insure the observance and execution of laws and decrees; (2) to draw up plans for local economic and cultural development and for

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- 632 public works; (3) to examine and approve local
634 budgets and financial reports; (4) to protect public property; (5) to maintain public order; (6) to safeguard the rights of citizens and the equal rights of national minorities.

Article 59 of the Communist Constitution stipulates that the congress elects and is empowered to recall the members of the government on the corresponding level.

The difference between the number of departments in a county and that in a municipality, which is directly under the central government and divided into districts, lies in the fact that the latter can have three more departments -- one for judicial administration, a second for control, and a third for planning; whereas a county and a municipality under provincial control and divided into districts, can have four more departments -- one for producers' co-operatives, one for control of industry and commerce, one for reconstruction, and one for labor.

Besides, the above-mentioned administrative departments there are voluntary organizations, such as the CPC, the peasants' associations, the militia, the New Democratic Youth Corps, the All-China Federation of Democratic Women, an association for the representatives sent to the congresses, the inhabitants' association, and many others -- a total of forty organizations. The number of people who work as staff members in these organizations can, in some places, reach an aggregate of 500.

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It is evident that all of these territorial and administrative organizations and voluntary associations strive to work out a means by which the inhabitants can be observed by the government and the Communist Party.

● 632 B. Communist Rule in A Rural District -- Yung-ho Hsiang

The following description of the Yung-ho hsiang government in the county of Hsin-teng, Chekiang Province, appeared in a Shanghai paper. It may have been written for the purpose of propaganda, but it does explain how a hsiang government is supposed to operate.

In the Yung-ho hsiang there is a population of 1,883 persons living in 525 families, classified into eight families of rich peasants, twelve families of small merchants, twenty-two families of craftsmen, and the remainder classed as peasant families. The Communist Party has a party branch in this hsiang, with a membership of nine, a youth branch of 68, a peasant's association, a Federation of Democratic Women, three agricultural producers' co-operatives, and thirty-three year-round mutual-aid teams; 95 per cent of all the peasants are included in the three co-operatives and the thirty-three teams.

When the work of "democratic reconstruction" was set in motion, the election procedure took place within all the organizations and teams. The whole population elected 92 delegates to the hsiang congress, among whom were one teacher, one craftsman, one merchant, and one rich peasant; the remainder were peasants. Twenty

- 632 per cent of the delegates were women. The Yung-ho Hsiang Congress elected Wen-chin-yüan as head, Lou Ch'uan-fa as deputy head, and thirteen members to the council. The work of the council is divided among: (1) Mutual Aids and Co-operatives, (2) Conciliation, (3) Relief, (4) Culture and Education, (5) Health, (6) Security and Defense, (7) Militia, (8) Irrigation, (9) Forestry, (10) Finance and Grain, (11) Census.

Several hundred proposals were made by the delegates to the hsiang congress, but they were finally reduced to the following categories: twelve proposals related to production; twenty related to irrigation; eighteen related to forestry; seven related to culture and education; three related to public safety; three related to taxes on rural products; two related to transportation; one related to health; one related to relief; ten general proposals; and twenty-four related to the party cadre.

The congress also passed resolutions in which the tasks for the next year were indicated as (1) increase of production for the year 1953, (2) increase of winter crops, (3) extension of word-study (reading), (4) co-operation with the government for the suppression of the Taoist Association, (5) forestry, (6) extension of consumers' co-operatives and (7) health. ⁹

The above descriptions emphasize organization of the people, enlisting them in the services

9. Chieh Fang Jih-pao [Liberation Daily].
Shanghai, December 11, 1952.

- 632 of associations and watching their activities, provides instruments of regimentation which see into every corner and oversee all details.

642 In conclusion, it may be said, that, although the Chinese Communists are intent upon carrying out the work of "democratic reconstruction," they are also making use of constitutional machinery, democratic institutions, and other voluntary associations in order to gain popular support for the purpose of building a broad foundation for the complete monopolization of power. It should be noticed that, before the promulgation of the Constitution, two or three years were spent in the political education of the people in order to increase their interest in polling and registration and parliamentary procedure; only then was the Chinese Communist Constitution put into effect. Regardless of the real motive of the Chinese Communists, it must be admitted that they have created a new era in the history of Chinese constitutional government.

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668 too many meetings⁴. Too many jobs and too many meetings³ resulted in inefficiency and demoralization. It was necessary for the Communists to begin Party rectification and work for the consolidation of the power centers in the rural districts.

Directives issued by the East China Military and Political Committee at the end of the Land Reform Movement prescribed the key tasks for rural work.⁵⁴ The theme was the increase of agricultural production through the organization of mutual teams and agricultural producers' co-operatives. This task was assigned to the Party and hsiang government and consequently made possible the transfer of political power from the Peasant's Association to Party and government agencies. This transfer was evidenced in the overhauling of Party units and mass organizations operating in the rural district, the convening of ch'ü and hsiang People's representative conferences and the strengthening of the hsiang government. The overhauling of Party units and mass organization was necessary because on these bases depended the transfer of power from the Peasant's Association to the Party and hsiang government.

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632 The convening of ch'ü and hsiang government People's representative conferences had

54. Liberation Daily, July 9, 1952, p. 1.

668 been an important task, because the control of
632 the conference by the Party ensured the election
of hsiang governments. Such a task was at first
limited to a few localities. The experience gained
was helpful in other areas. However, in Shan-
tung, the progress was better, due largely to
the early conclusion of land reform.

The convening of hsiang People's
representative conferences involved the holding
of peasant representative conferences and the
election of hsiang governments. As of July
1951, some 37 per cent (4,865) of the hsiang
governments in Shantung Province had under-
gone the process of consolidation.⁵⁵ At the
Second East China Civil Affairs Conference⁵⁶
in July 1952, some 2,147 representative con-
ferences were held and 17,128 hsiang govern-
ments had been established (34.2 per cent of
the total). The newly established hsiang govern-
ments were reorganized to include the several
commissions on co-operatives, public security,
finance and food, culture and education, militia,
mediation, relief and irrigation, and forestry.

Equally important to the reorganization

55. Ibid., July 25, 1951, p. 6.

56. Ibid., July 9, 1952, p. 1.

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668 of hsiang governments is the strengthening of
632 rural leadership. The principle of collective leadership was the central theme. It called for redesignation of the Committee jobs, the introduction of new administrative procedures, and the strengthening of Party leadership over other mass organizations. The old practice of concentration of power in one individual and the delegation of power to a few were declared outmoded methods.

C. The Election and the Post-Constitution Period

666 The Communists' announcement of nationwide elections in 1953 indicated the degree of confidence in their power at the basic administrative levels. However, the elections held in 1953 and 1954 served again as an instrument to liquidate opposition.

668 In the East China Region, the attempt to
631 abolish the village as an administrative unit and to reallocate hsiang administrations has been designated as one of the tasks involved in the establishment of Communist power in the rural area prior to the elections.⁵⁷ However, before 1953 such tasks were restricted to a few places and served to gain experience before

57. Directive of rural political works, ibid., July 9, 1952, p. 1.